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of the giants upon whose shoulders Newton so generously confessed that he had stood in viewing the universe, to the study of the laws of which he so extensively contributed.

David Eugene Smith.

Practical Least Squares. By O. M. Leland. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1921. 8vo. 14 + 237 pages. Price $3.00.

The following extracts from the preface will indicate the purpose and plan of this textbook on the subject of Least Squares:

> "It is designed particularly for use in short courses of instruction and by engineers and scientists in connection with their private practice. It will not replace the more elaborate treatises on the subject but the author hopes that it will introduce the student directly to the simpler methods of solving the ordinary problems in adjustment.
>
> "The plan of the work is essentially practical. . . . By far the greater number of applications of Least Squares do not require a consideration of the precision of the results nor a knowledge of the mean square or probable errors. Moreover the subject of precision is usually the most troublesome part of the work for the student or the beginner to understand. Therefore, the practical methods of adjustment are explained directly and fully, without regard to the probable errors or to the theoretical derivation of the Law of Error."

As an introductory text, this book may be recommended on the basis of the following excellent features: the material is well graded, the text is illustrated by numerous examples, the explanation is always clear, and is mingled with a judicious amount of suggestion and of warning; in fact, a more simple presentation for the use of private study could not be asked. There are other points that might be suggested in possible criticism. The style throughout suggests the well-delivered lecture, and is not primarily designed for ready reference. There are no theorems so labelled, no isolated definitions, and worst of all, no problems for solution. Except for the language employed and for the gradual development, there is little if anything original in the treatment. One would almost suppose that the subject was as fossilized as elementary trigonometry. The mathematical features of theoretical interest are relegated to the Introduction and to the Appendices, and are treated with so little concern for logic that any critical reader might have preferred their entire omission. Since the book is intended to be available for a brief course of sixteen lessons, the student is not likely to suffer much from the shortcomings of the supplementary remarks upon the theory underlying the subject.

The work is not intended as a contribution to the development of science, and many questions that would lead into larger fields are avoided in connections that would seem to justify at least a hint for the encouragement of the ambitious or inquiring student, but the author has been generous in his references to easily available American texts, and to one or two classical treatises in foreign languages.

Albert A. Bennett.